

Orange in Vietnam ensured he would be one of the first to recognize and push for treatment of Gulf War Syndrome and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Physical and mental health were not the only fights that he entered into on behalf of Veterans. He also led the battle to get equitable treatment for female veterans and worked tirelessly to combat the plight of homeless veterans across America. His work to ensure a high quality of life for those who have served us with honor will be one of his most noted legacies in this body.

LANE, I thank you for your friendship, your leadership and all of your service to our Nation. I know you have forever left your mark on your Nation, the House of Representatives, and all the veterans who have received better treatment because of your work.

Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to enclose with my statement the remarks of my predecessor and friend who also served this body with his full heart and soul, the Honorable Andy Jacobs, former Congressman for the 10th Congressional District of Indiana.

DECEMBER 8, 2006.

Hon. LANE EVANS, MC,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LANE: The time has come for me to put on paper what I have fervently entertained in my mind through the years of our acquaintance.

To begin, you are one of my authentic heroes. British Lord Chesterton said, "Sometimes it takes less courage to die for one's country than to tell her the truth." On many more than one occasion you have displayed that greater courage in the profoundly patriotic performance of your chores as a member of Congress, service quite literally "above and beyond the call of duty."

In your effective opposition to the mindless, gratuitous and vicarious militarism of some national leaders, you have helped save the lives of hapless public spirited young Americans. Thus, you have done God's work most nobly.

For the young Americans who have been forced into unnecessary permanent combat disability, you have been a major national factor in achieving justice in terms of veterans' benefits.

You have also given our Nation bright lessons of prudence with the public purse. Thank you for being my friend and friend to all peace-loving freedom-loving Americans.

Sincerely,

ANDY JACOBS, JR.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PAGE PROGRAM

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to include in the RECORD the following commentary by Jason Ackerman, of Fort Mill, South Carolina, which is in my congressional district. Jason was a House page in 2003–2004 and is now a student at New York University.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PAGE PROGRAM (By Jason Ackerman)

New York Times columnist John Tierney argues that the congressional page program should be eliminated because it serves no purpose for pages or for the country ("A page, M'Lord, at your service," Oct. 4).

Well John Tierney was obviously never a page.

I served as a page from August 2003 to January 2004. These months were some of the most special moments of my life—months in which I not only learned how Congress operates, but also months in which I made some of the greatest friends of my life.

A day in the life of a page is not easy. It starts at 6:45 in the morning when we all walk from our dorm a couple of blocks from the Capitol to the Library of Congress's Jefferson Building where school is held. Full-time teachers teach the same subjects that we would otherwise have been taking back at our home schools.

The school is not a piece of cake either. The courses are very challenging, so challenging in fact that when I came back to my high school I was way ahead in most subjects.

After school, which lasted until the House of Representatives commenced, we would head over to the Floor of the House of Representatives where we would start our daily tasks. There are many different page jobs, most of which are rotated around so everyone gets an opportunity to experience different areas of the House.

Some pages are runners, which involved taking documents from one place in the Capitol to another. Others are cloakroom pages, where we worked in the cloakroom answering phones about floor proceedings. Still others are in charge of the bell system and of raising and lowering the flag every day on the top of the House of Representatives to declare that the House is in session.

The day ends when the House goes out of session. This can be anywhere from 5:00 in the afternoon to 7:00 in the morning. Then we head home, do homework, socialize, clean our rooms (which are checked three times a week), and then go to bed at mandatory curfew hour, which was 10:00 on weekdays and 12:00 on weekends.

Some of my most memorable and enjoyable moments as a page were getting to interact with members of the House. Some would come by and tell us jokes, and others would take the time to help us identify someone we were trying to find or to explain to us what was going on at that moment in the complicated proceedings of the House.

Yes there were some unfriendly ones, but by and large most members are very kind and generous. There was not a single time in which I felt insecure or unsafe while on the Floor or at any other time while I was a page.

The lifelong friendships that I made because of the page program are some of the most amazing friendships of my life. Former pages are some of my closest friends, and I keep in touch with a lot of them on a daily or weekly basis. I now have friends in California and Wyoming that I would never have had the chance to make without this experience.

The page experience is something that I would not trade for anything, and it was one of the greatest times of my life. I witnessed history first hand, and made a ton of friends in the process. The experience also sparked my interest in public service, government, and the political process. I would not hesitate one moment to send my child to be a page.

These views are also shared with every one of my classmates that I have spoken to since the Foley scandal has erupted. My roommate, who was actually sponsored by Congressman Foley, stressed the importance of continuing the program because of how the program changed his life as well.

The only people who do not want the program to continue are people who know nothing about the program and have never talked to a page.

Congressman Foley made a mistake, and should be punished to the full extent of the law, but to punish the page program for his mistake is not only unfortunate but also unjust.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE OF ILLINOIS

SPEECH OF

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2006

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 32 years of service from the distinguished gentleman from Illinois, my friend and colleague, Chairman HENRY J. HYDE. I am humbled to say that I have served the American people alongside a truly great American.

Though I have only served for a little over a year with him, I have grown to admire him for his unwavering commitment to protecting innocent life. Mr. HYDE has fought vigorously to protect those who cannot protect themselves most notably with the Hyde Amendment in 1976. Before taking office, I was President of Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati and admired his leadership and guided wisdom.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for his commitment to principle rather than expediency. He stood up for American values and during the Cold War, worked to ensure that America remain that shining city on a hill. I am honored and proud to say that I am his colleague.

The gentleman and his leadership and wisdom will be missed. This institution has certainly been blessed by his service. Mr. Chairman, congratulations on your retirement and congratulations to you and your new bride.

CONGRATULATING THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF KAZAKHSTAN ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating the Government and the people of Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of their independence. I am encouraged by how far this Central Asian country has come since its independence in 1991, both in terms of economic and democratic progress. Kazakhstan has overcome numerous obstacles and challenges and today is a well recognized leader in promotion of economic and political freedoms in a region of great and growing importance to the security of the United States.

This year we also mark the 15th anniversary of the U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship. Kazakhstan has become not only a strategic partner, but a true friend of the United States. Kazakhstan has been a valuable ally to the